

MEDREGION UPDATE

Regional Office Tunis

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MEPI in 2009— apply for a grant!

- The Tunis Regional Office has around \$2 million to support grants in the region.
- Details on how to apply can be found on page three or with your local MEPI committee.
- Make this the year to become involved with your community...and MEPI activities!

Women in Technology (WIT)



A participant in WIT program training session

Women in technology" (WIT), is a MEPI-funded program that is implemented in partnership with Microsoft and administered by the Institute of International Education in San Francisco. WIT aims to empower women and expand their participation in the workforce and civil society by providing women and local partner organizations with cutting-edge training in business planning, professional development and information technology.

Since its launch in 2005, WIT has trained over 6,000 women and built the capacity of more than 50 local women's organizations across nine countries: Bahrain, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Saudi Arabia, UAE and Yemen.

In Morocco the WIT program conducted a series of training sessions and workshops in different fields that aimed to introduce Moroccan women to teamwork and encourage them to be active and involved in the development of their communities through fostering professional networks.

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Welcome to New MEPI Members

The MEPI Regional Office is very pleased to welcome new members to the team: Jed Dornburg joins us at the Regional Office in Tunis as our Deputy Director and Moon Shin is the new intern.

Their biographic information is below, and we wish them both a warm welcome to MEPI!



*Jed Taro Dornburg
Deputy Director
MEPI Regional Office, Tunis*

Jed Taro Dornburg is the Deputy Director and Grants Officer of the MEPI Regional Office in Tunis.

Jed has been a career Foreign Service Officer with the State Department since 2004. Jed is specialized in Public Diplomacy. He served previously in Sana'a, Yemen as a Political Officer and in Maseru, Lesotho, as Public Diplomacy, Political and Consular Officer.

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Born in Suva, Fiji, Jed lived in seven countries, before joining the Foreign Service, namely: Australia, USA, England, Italy, Kenya, Saudi Arabia and Japan.

Jed is joined in Tunis by his wife and two year old daughter.

Moon Shin is the new intern for the MEPI Regional Office at the US Embassy in Tunis, Tunisia.



*Moon Shin
Intern in MEPI Regional
Office, Tunis.*

He is currently an undergraduate student at the University of California, Berkeley, majoring in Political Science. He is expected to graduate in May of 2010.

Prior to attending school, Moon served in the US Army for 4 ½ years as an infantryman, serving 2 overseas tours in Korea and Iraq before being honorably

discharged in 2006. Born in Seoul, South Korea, Moon immigrated to the United States in 1997. Following graduation, Moon plans to join the State Department Foreign Service. Moon has been providing a tremendous amount of help in analyzing and preparing the large number of Local Grant proposals currently in the RO.

Fostering social Awareness within Arab communities in Israel

Al Manarah Association for the Advancement of the Arab Blind in Israel launched a project entitled "Fostering Social Awareness". As part of this project, the Association conducted a series of workshops which exposed participants to the world of persons with disabilities in particular blind. Each workshop was divided into two parts. The first part started with theoretical information

regarding the rights of persons with disabilities and ended with discussion on coping with stereotypes against persons with disabilities in Arab society. The second part gave students an opportunity to feel what it is like to be blind through practical activities such as using a cane.

Al Manarah also organized seminars targeting parents and school teachers raising



Workshop: Practical activities



A seminar

awareness on changing attitudes towards the blind and persons with disabilities. These lectures focused on the role of the family and school in blind children's development. Al Manarah distributed materials such as brochures and flyers entitled "Be Kind to the Blind", which provide guidelines to the general public on how to relate to the blind.

The flyers were distributed at Al Manarah's school workshops, meetings and seminars.

Each of the workshops had an attendance of at least 25 students and participants. A number of attendees volunteered to participate in future Al Manarah's activities and programs.

Women in Technology (WIT) *(Continued from page 1)*

The WIT program in Morocco has organized orientation and training sessions on networking for its participants from Rabat, Sale, Temara, Azrou, Ein Leuh, Timahdit, Marrakech and Oujda.

Networking is a core component of the WIT program that is developed in parallel with the training sessions offered by the program and through orientation and training sessions.

The development of professional networks will enable WIT participants to maximize their opportunities in learning, training, connecting together, organizing activities, assisting each other and sharing their experiences.

Training sessions on networking have introduced WIT participants to the creation and management of professional networks through workshops, ice-breakers and practical exercises.

During these training sessions, WIT participants gathered to

create their own networks and define an action plan that outlines their objectives, mission, activities as well as timeline planning.

Blogging:

This year and for the first time since its launch in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region in 2005, the WIT program included, as part of its package, blogging as a new training module. WIT participants learned how to create and manage a blog through the blogging webpage: www.blogger.com

Moroccan women participants created their own blogs, which touched upon a wide range of topics, such as family code, promoting embroidery, handicrafts, and sharing cultural activities in Morocco. The blogging module for women participating in the WIT program has a two-fold goal. It enables participants to master rudimentary blogging and therefore encourages them to take advantage of the different



Orientation and networking training session Rabat, Sale et Temara

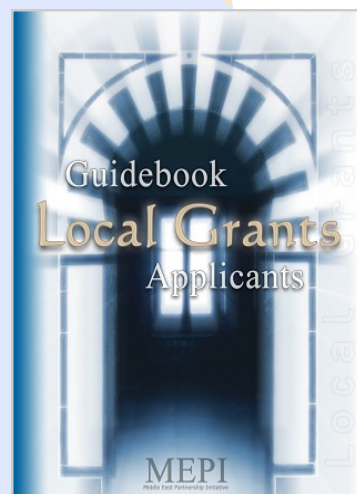
opportunities offered by ambitions, experiences, this tool. Furthermore, it expands their network, helps women to freely and explore new express their ideas, horizons.

**Become a partner
for reform !**

Submit your grant applications now!

Funding is available now for Local Grants. Please contact your country's US Embassy MEPI Committee and see the guidebook available on our [website](http://www.medregion.mepi.state.gov) for step-by-step instructions in English, Arabic, or French!

www.medregion.mepi.state.gov





Middle East Partnership Initiative

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ABOUT MEPI:

The Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), located within the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, assists efforts to expand political participation, strengthen civil society and the rule of law, empower women and youth, create educational opportunities, and foster economic reform throughout the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

MEPI Regional Office, Tunis

Housed at the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, the Regional Office (RO) administers MEPI local programs in Algeria, Egypt, Israel, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, and West Bank/Gaza, accounting around \$2 million in program funding each year. In addition to coordinating with the U.S. Embassies throughout the region, the Tunis RO organizes conferences (such as the Business Women's Summit and Student Leaders Alumni Conference), facilitates exchange programs (such as the Leaders for Democracy Fellowship program and the Students Leaders program), and provides a variety of funding opportunities (such as the MEPI

Local Grants program and Civil Society Grants), as well as supporting visits, seminars, and training programs designed to advance reform.

We are on the web!
www.medregion.mepi.state.gov

Motivating Community and Political Participation for the People of Naga'a Helal Village

The Association of the Development of Women in Naga'a Helal Village (ADW NHV) in Egypt conducted a project entitled "Motivating Community and Political Participation for the People of awareness sessions, round table discussions, training sessions for local NGOs, and members of the media. The sessions were marked by the attendance of 1,069 men and women. Ages ranged from 18



An awareness raising seminar

Naga'a Helal Village" aimed to 50.

to raise citizen awareness of their rights and responsibilities and to increase community activity and political participation in the decision-making process.

The ADW NHV organized

During these sessions participants discussed the reasons behind the low voters' turnout as well as addressing topics such as the importance of political



A discussion session

participation and social movement and the Legal System and political Participation in Egypt.

As a result of the training, participants initiated a community sewerage project. Furthermore, the members of the community, who had attended the sessions, resolved a shortcoming in government service to the community by acquiring a building that will

be a community center and bring the government registrar office into the village. The community of the Al Nasrab Village took advantage of the training and media presence to convey their concerns of pollution from neighboring factories to the competent government bodies and learned a lesson about the media's role in good governance.